

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GEORGE 01034 191932Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04
NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 L-03 NSC-05
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 /068 W
-----200237Z 090362 /75

R 191816Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4683
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 1034

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, GY
SUBJECT: BURNHAM CONTINUES MEET-THE-PEOPLE TOURS

SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM MADE SECOND IN SERIES OF
MET-THE -PEOPLE TOURS ON MAY 14 AND 15 WHEN HE VISITED
MARZARUNI-POTARO DISTRICT. AS RESULT OF FRANK DISCUSSIONS
WITH WORKERS, BURNHAM GAVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR SETTING UP OF
WORKER-MANAGEMENT COUNCILS, PROMISED INVESTIGATION OF PARTY
OFFICIALS IN REGION, AND MADE NUMBER OF OTHER PROMISES TO
DEAL WITH SPECIFIC COMPLAINTS. BURNHAM WARNED MANAGEMENT
THAT THEY DID NOT FUNCTION UNDER OLD COLONIAL SYSTEM AND
MUST BE RESPONSIVE TO WORKERS' PROBLEMS BUT HE ALSO TOLD
WORKERS THAT THEY MUST BE MORE PRODUCTIVE. END SUMMARY.

1. IN THREE-HOUR MEETING WITH WORKERS OF UPPER MAZARUNI
ROAD PROJECT (UMRP), PM BURNHAM GAVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR
SETTING UP WORKERS' PARTICIPATORY COUNCIL AND PROMISED
WORKERS THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE VICTIMISED FOR SPEAKING
FRANKLY TO MANAGEMENT ABOUT THEIR PROBLEMS. THROUGHOUT
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TWO-DAY TOUR OF AREA, BURNHAM REPEATEDLY ATTACKED
MANAGEMENT. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, AT ONE STOP HE
TOLD MANAGMENET PERSONNEL THAT QUOTE YOU ARE NOT MANAGING
UNDER THE OLD EXPATRIATES--IMPERIALIST COMPANY--BUT
UNDER A SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT. THESE ARE NOT THE DAYS WHEN
YOU SIT ON YOUR ASSES AND TREAT WORKERS LIKE DUST. IT IS
NO SENSE FUSSING OVER ME WHEN I COME AND YOU TREAT MY

PEOPLE LIKE DOGS UNQUOTE.

2. THE CHRONICLE ALSO REPORTED THAT A NEW MANAGEMENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE WILL BE SET UP TO EXECUTE THE FINAL STAGE OF UMRP. DURING PM'S VISIT COMPLETION OF 154 MILES OF PLANNED 210 MILES OF HYDRO-POWER ACCESS ROAD WAS MARKED. ENTIRE UMRP IS EXPECTED TO COST G\$90 MILLION.

3. SPEAKING WITH EMPLOYEES OF GUYANA TIMERS LIMITED (GTL), BURNHAM ANNOUNCED THAT WORKERS IN STATE CORPORATIONS WILL GET MATERIAL AND FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR PRODUCTION UNDER NEW GUYSTAC SCHEME TO BE INTRODUCED SHORTLY; HOWEVER, HE ALSO WARNED THAT GTL MIGHT HAVE TO BE SHUT DOWN IF IT CONTINUED TO RUN AT A LOSS. HE ORDERED REESTABLISHMENT OF A MANAGEMENT-WORKERS COUNCIL TO HELP SOLVE WORKERS' PROBLEMS, AND PROMISED A NEW TRAINING SCHEME FOR GTL WORKERS, INCREASED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, AND BETTER LIVING CONDITIONS.

4. AT BARTICA, BURNHAM PROMISED TO WAGE WAR AGAINST GOVERNMENT AND PARTY OFFICIALS WHO MISUSE OR MISMANAGE GOVERNMENT FUNDS OR PROPERTY OR FAIL TO PERFORM THEIR DUTIES. HE ANNOUNCED THAT A PARTY COMMISSION WILL BE SET UP NEXT WEEK TO EXAMINE SITUATION IN REGION. HOWEVER, BURNHAM WARNED PEOPLE THAT SOCIALISM WAS NOT SYNONYMOUS WITH INDISCIPLINE AND THAT PEOPLE MUST RESPECT REGIONAL SYSTEM. HE POINTED OUT THAT HE COULD NOT SOLVE ALL PROBLEMS ALONE.

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5. COMMENT: WE HAVE HEARD REPORTS, BELIEVED TO BE RELIABLE, THAT THE GOG HAS BEEN CUTTING BACK DRASTICALLY ON EXPENDITURES IN THE UMRP AND LAYING OFF AND/OR TRANSFERRING BOTH MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL AND WORKERS. THE STATEMENTS MADE IN THE LAST FEW DAYS, HOWEVER, WOULD INDICATE THAT A TOTAL STOPPAGE OF WORK IN THE AREA IS NOT CONTEMPLATED. DURING HIS TWO MEET-THE-PEOPLE TOURS, PM BURNHAM MADE MANY PROMISES TO MEET SPECIFIC MINOR COMPLAINTS, BUT HE TOLD WORKERS BLUNTLY THAT INCREASED PRODUCTION IS BASIC SOLUTION TO PRESENT ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES. DURING WELL-PUBLICIZED DISCUSSION WITH WORKERS, BURNHAM FACED TOUGH CRITICISM AND DEMANDS FOR GREATER AVAILABILITY OF FOODSTUFFS AND LOWER PRICES. SESSIONS WITH WORKERS WERE APTLY LABELLED "SHOOT-OUTS" BY CHRONICLE EDITORIAL. BURHMAN APPEARS TO BE ATTEMPTING TO DEFLECT CRITICISM FROM HIMSELF BY VIGOROUSLY ATTACKING MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS. ABLE TO OFFER NO IMMEDIATE SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS WHICH ARE ECONOMIC IN NATURE, BURNHAM IS MAKING REMARKABLE EFFORT TO HOLD AND GAIN SUPPORT THROUGH FORCE OF HIS CHARISMA.

IN DOING THIS, BURNHAM AGAIN MAY BE FALLING INTO
STRENUOUS PATTERN OF PERSONALLY INVOLVING HIMSELF IN
DAY-TO-DAY DETAILS OF ADMINISTRATION WHICH CONTRIBUTED
TO HIS HEART ATTACK. HIS DOCTORS ARE REPORTEDLY WORRIED
OVER HIS INCREASED SMOKING AND LONG WORKING HOURS.
BLACKEN

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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TAGS: PINT, GY, (BURNHAM, L F S)
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